

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7, 9 and 19-24 remain pending in the application with the present amendments. In the Office Action, all pending claims were rejected as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,349,301 to Mitchell ("*Mitchell*") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,954,728 to Kusumoto ("*Kusomoto*"). For the reasons set forth below, applicants submit that the presently pending claims are fully distinguished from the combination of *Mitchell* and *Kusumoto*. Applicants respectfully request that the present rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn in view of the amendments and remarks made herein.

The combination of *Mitchell* and *Kusumoto* neither teaches nor suggests the features of the invention recited in claim 1 and other claims pending herein. As now recited in claim 1, the terminal computer must be operable to award an object to the operator when the operator solves a problem in an interactive game presented during execution of a first game program on the terminal computer. The Office Action indicates that *Mitchell* does not teach the requirement of claim 1 relating to the operator solving a problem (last few lines of page 3 and beginning of page 4). The Office Action also indicates that *Mitchell* does not teach the first program as being executable independently from a second program that displays the object. In addition, *Mitchell* neither teaches nor suggests a terminal computer which is operable to transmit the awarded object to the server computer under control of the operator to which the object is awarded.

It is respectfully submitted that *Kusumoto* neither teaches nor suggests the features of the invention which are lacking in *Mitchell*. *Kusumoto* merely describes presenting the operator of a terminal computer with a menu from which to choose an advertisement in connection with displaying an avatar of the

operator. Merely choosing an advertisement from a menu does not meet the recited language of a terminal computer being operable to award an object to the operator of the terminal computer when the operator solves a problem in an interactive game presented during execution of a first game program. Moreover, *Kusumoto* does not teach a terminal computer operable to transmit an object awarded in such manner to a server computer under control of the operator to which the object is awarded.

In addition, suggestion and motivation are lacking for the person of ordinary skill to combine the teachings of *Mitchell* with those of *Kusumoto*. The advertisements taught by *Kusumoto* are not objects awarded when the operator solves a problem in an interactive game within the meaning of that term as used in claim 1. Moreover, since the advertisements are not awarded objects within the meaning of the term in claim 1, *Kusumoto* is not properly combined with *Mitchell* to reject claim 1.

Independent claims 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 contain similar recitations and are believed to overcome the rejections over *Mitchell* and *Kusumoto* for at least the same reasons as discussed above. All other claims depend from one of the above-mentioned claims and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

Support for the present amendments is provided, *inter alia*, at paragraphs [0010], [0024], [0033]-[0034], [0044], [0060]-[0065].

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he

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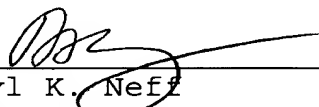
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telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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